

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DACCA 03205 200954Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 SSO-00 HA-05
SP-02 L-03 H-01 PA-01 ICAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 INRE-00 DODE-00 HEW-04 OMB-01 TRSE-00
NSCE-00 AGRE-00 /067 W
-----058390 201002Z /15

O P 200900Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9391
USMISSION GENEVA NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 3205

PASS ALSO TO AID/ASIA AND OFDA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR SREF BG BM
SUBJECT: ASSISTANCE TO MUSLIMS FLEEING BURMA

REFS STATE 127656; DACCA 3180, DACCA 3204

1. HIGH LEVEL BDG MEETING TO BE CHAIRED BY PRESIDENT ZIA TONIGHT ON
NEXT STEPS RE ARKENESE REFUGEE PROBLEM. RELIEF SECRETARY KHASRU
WILL PRESENT LIST OF SUPPLIES REQUIRED PER MONTH TO MEET NEEDS OF
REFUGEES WHICH ARE NOW SOMEWHAT IN EXCESS OF 150,000 AND CINTINUING
TO GROW. KHASRU'S LIST WILL INCLUDE MONTHLY REQUIREMENT OF 1000
TONS OF RICE AND 1000 TONS OF WHEAT PLUS SUBSTANTIAL REQUIRE-
MENTS FOR CASH TO PURCHASE MEDICINES, CLOTHING BAMBOO POLES FOR HOUSI
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CONSTRUCTION. HE ALSO LISTS NEED FOR 500 TUBEWELLS FOR DRINKING WATER
AS WELL AS SANITARY FACILITIES. TOTAL LIST NOT MADE AVAILABLE TO USAI
D.

2. IN MEETING WITH USAID DIRECTOR MAY 20, KHASRU SAID MODALITIES OF
UNHCR ROLE NOT YET WORKED OUT. HE SEES UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE
PLAYING AN IMPORTANT INFORMATIONAL AND LIASON ROLE BETWEEN DONORS

AND RELIEF MINISTRY PARTICULARLY FOR SHORT TERM FUTURE. HOWEVER, HE SEES NEED TO NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH BILATERAL DONORS ON LONGER TERM PROGRAMS WHICH WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED BY BDG AND MONITORED BY DONOR CONCERNED. THERE HAS BEEN NO BDG PLANNING AS YET ON WHAT TO DO IN THE LONGER TERM FOR THOSE MUSLIMS WHOM THE BURMESE REFUSE TO READMIT. GIVEN THE GENERAL LEVEL OF POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT THROUGHOUT BANGLADESH, KHASRU DOES NOT KNOW WHERE A RELOCATION PROGRAM COULD BE UNDERTAKEN. HE RECOGNIZES THIS SUBJECT WILL HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED SOON BUT DOES NOT BELIEVE THE BDG IN ITS PRESENT STANCE WITH BURMA CAN INDICATE THAT ANY SOLUTION OTHER THAN RETURN OF ALL REFUGEES TO BURMA IS UNDER CONSIDERATION.

3. SUPPLIES THUS FAR RECEIVED FROM UK THROUGH ODM AND PVO SOURCES CONSISTS PRINCIPALLY OF PLASTIC SHEETING AND SMALL BUNDLES OF CLOTHING AND MEDICINES. HE ESTIMATES TOTAL VALUE AT DOLS 50,000. HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW THE DOLS 200,000 CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE GENEVA RED CROSS ORGANIZATION WILL BE USED. THERE IS OBVIOUS TENSION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY AND BANGLADESH RED CROSS LEADERSHIP.

4. RE. PARA 4 REFTEL WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING OR GUESSING THE PROPORTIONS OF REFUGEES AS AGAINST DISPLACED PERSONS. USG REPRESENTATIVES HAVE NOT RPT NOT VISITED CAMP SITES AND THE INFORMATION FROM BDG SOURCES PROVIDES NO BASIS FOR ANALYSIS. BDG WILL WISH TO DEMONSTRATE FOR POLITICAL REASONS THAT MUSLIMS ARE REFUGEES AND IT WOULD FIND CONTRARY OPINION FROM US EMBARRASSING.
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5. RE. PARA 5 REFTEL, WE WILL SEND FURTHER CABLE MAY 22 FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH WFP REPRESENTATIVE WHO IS ACTING AS INTERIM UNHCR COORDINATOR. HOWEVER, AS OF THIS DATE WE SEE THE MOST IMMEDIATE NEED BEING CASH TO PURCHASE ITEMS AVAILABLE LOCALLY LIKE BAMBOO, SARIS, LUNGIS AND CHILDRENS CLOTHING. AS A LONGER TERM NEED WE SEE FOOD REQUIREMENTS AS NOTED BY KHASRU. THE QUANTUM OF FOOD NEEDED WILL DEPEND ON CONTINUING GROWTH OF CAMP POPULATIONS. TWO THOUSAND TONS OF FOODGRAIN PLUS VEGOIL AND SOME DIETARY SUPPLEMENT FOR CHILDREN WOULD APPEAR TO BE MINIMAL NEEDS. ALL SUCH REQUIREMENTS COULD BE FURNISHED UNDER PL 480 TITLE II.
SCHNEIDER

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Message Attributes

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